



**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
LUFKIN DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

MICHAEL KEITH HARRIS

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CASE NO. 9:04-CR-1

**FINDINGS OF FACT AND RECOMMENDATION ON PLEA OF TRUE
BEFORE THE UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE**

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(b) and the Local Rules for the District Court, Eastern District of Texas, the District Court referred this matter for hearing and the submission of findings of fact and a report and recommendation pursuant to 18 U.S.C. §§ 3401(i) and 3583(e). The United States alleges that the defendant, Michael Keith Harris, violated conditions of supervised release imposed by United States District Judge Thad Heartfield. The United States Probation Office filed its *Petition for Warrant or Summons for Offender Under Supervision* requesting the revocation of the defendant's supervised release. The Court conducted a hearing on June 19, 2012, in accordance with Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure 11, 32 and 32.1. Defendant was present and represented by counsel at the hearing. Having heard the evidence, this court factually finds that the defendant has violated conditions of supervision and recommends that such violation warrants the revocation

of his supervised release.

After conducting the proceeding in the form and manner prescribed by Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure¹¹, the Court finds:

a. That Defendant, after consultation with counsel of record, has knowingly, freely and voluntarily consented to the administration of the plea of true in this cause by a United States Magistrate Judge subject to a final approval and imposition of sentence by the District Court.

b. That Defendant is fully competent and capable of entering an informed plea, that Defendant is aware of the nature of the charges and the consequences of the plea, that his plea of true is a knowing and voluntary plea, not the result of force or threats, and that the plea is supported by an independent evidentiary basis in fact establishing each of the essential elements of the conduct.

STATEMENT OF REASONS

A. Procedural History

On July 28, 2004, the Honorable Thad Heartfield of the Eastern District of Texas sentenced the defendant after he pled guilty to the offense of felon in possession of a firearm, a Class D felony. Judge Heartfield sentenced Mr. Harris to a term of 77 months imprisonment followed by a two year term of supervised release subject to the standard conditions of release, plus special conditions to include financial disclosure and drug testing and treatment. On September 14, 2011, Mr. Harris completed his period of imprisonment and began serving his term of supervised release.

On April 12, 2012, the Court modified Harris' term of supervision to include 90 day placement in a residential reentry center or similar facility.

B. Allegations in Petition

The United States alleges that Defendant violated the following special condition of

supervised release:

The defendant shall reside in a residential reentry center or similar facility, in a prerelease component for a period of 90 days to commence upon release from confinement and shall observe the rules of that facility.

Specifically, on May 8, 2012, Mr. Harris was terminated from the Leidel Residential Reentry Center for failure to comply with the rules of the facility. Specifically, Mr. Harris walked out of the facility on April 28, 2012, and never returned.

C. Evidence presented at Hearing:

At the hearing, the Government offered the following evidence as its factual basis for the allegations set out *supra*. The Government would submit evidence establishing that on May 8, 2012, Michael Keith Harris was terminated from the Leidel Residential Reentry Center. Evidence would further show that Harris was terminated because he walked out of Leidel on April 28, 2012, and did not return.

Defendant, Michael Keith Harris, offered a plea of true to the allegations. Specifically, Mr. Harris agreed with the evidence presented and pled true to the allegation that he was terminated from the Leidel Residential Reentry Center in violation of his supervision conditions.

D. Sentencing Guidelines; Findings and Recommended Disposition

The allegations, supporting evidence, and plea of true warrant revocation of supervised release. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3583(e)(3). The Court factually finds by a preponderance of the evidence that the defendant violated a special condition of his supervised release by being terminated from the Leidel Residential Reentry Center for failure to comply with the rules of that facility.

If the Court finds that the defendant violated his supervision conditions by being terminated from the residential reentry center, this will constitute a Grade C violation under U.S.S.G. §

7B1.1(a). Upon finding a Grade C violation, the Court may revoke the defendant's supervised release. *See* U.S.S.G. § 7B1.3(a)(2). Based upon Harris' criminal history category of VI and the Grade C violation, the Sentencing Guidelines suggest a sentence of imprisonment for a period ranging from eight (8) to fourteen (14) months. *See* U.S.S.G. § 7B1.4(a). Because the original offense of conviction was a Class D felony, the statutory maximum imprisonment term upon revocation is two (2) years, less any imprisonment term served on a previous revocation. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3583(e)(3).

According to U.S.S.G. § 7B1.3(d), any restitution, fine, community confinement, home detention, or intermittent confinement previously imposed in connection with a sentence for which revocation is ordered that remains unpaid or unserved at the time of revocation shall be ordered to be paid or served in addition to the sanction determined under U.S.S.G. § 7B1.4, and any such unserved period of community confinement, home detention, or intermittent confinement may be converted to an equivalent period of imprisonment. In this case, Harris failed to serve 76 days of time in the Leidel Residential Reentry Center which he was ordered to serve as part of his terms of supervision.

The Fifth Circuit states that Chapter 7 of the Sentencing Guidelines regarding the revocation of supervised release is advisory only. *See United States v. Cade*, 279 F.3d 265, 271 n.2 (5th Cir. 2002) (citing *United States v. Montez*, 952 F.2d 854, 859 (5th Cir. 1992); *United States v. Headrick*, 963 F.2d 777, 782 (5th Cir. 1992)). Because Chapter 7 was promulgated as an advisory policy statement and there are no applicable guidelines for sentencing after revocation of supervised release¹, the Court may impose a greater or lesser sentence upon revocation. *United States v.*

¹ *See U.S. Sentencing Guidelines Manual*, Ch. 7, pt. A, cmt. 1 ("At this time, the Commission has chosen to promulgate policy statements only.")

Gonzalez, 250 F.3d 923, 925 (5th Cir. 2001). Further, a sentence imposed for revocation will be upheld unless it is in violation of the law or plainly unreasonable. *Id.* See also *United States v. Pena*, 125 F.3d 285, 288 (5th Cir. 1997) (citations omitted).

Here, the evidence and the defendant's own admission supports a finding that he violated his supervision conditions. The Court, therefore, finds by a preponderance of the evidence that the defendant committed a Grade C violation of his supervision conditions by being terminated from the residential reentry center. Mr. Harris knowingly and voluntarily pled true and agreed with the Court's recommended sentence for that violation.

Accordingly, based upon the defendant's plea of true, the agreement of the parties, and the evidence presented in this case, it is the recommendation of the undersigned United States Magistrate Judge that the District Court accept the plea of true and revoke the defendant's supervised release. The undersigned magistrate judge further recommends that the District Court order the defendant, Michael Keith Harris, to serve a term of **eleven (11) months imprisonment**, to include 76 days unserved time that the defendant was ordered to serve in a residential reentry center as part of his supervision conditions. The undersigned also recommends that the defendant be placed in the Federal Correctional Complex (FCC) in Beaumont, Texas, to serve his sentence. The Court finally recommends that Mr. Harris receive no further supervision upon his release.

OBJECTIONS

Objections must be: (1) specific, (2) in writing, and (3) served and filed within fourteen (14) days after being served with a copy of this report. See 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1). A party's failure to object bars that party from: (1) entitlement to *de novo* review by a district judge of proposed findings and recommendations, see *Rodriguez v. Bowen*, 857 F.2d 275, 276-77 (5th Cir. 1988), and (2) appellate review, except on grounds of plain error of unobjected-to factual findings and legal

conclusions accepted by the district court, *see Douglass v. United Servs. Auto. Ass'n.*, 79 F.3d 1415, 1417 (5th Cir. 1996) (en banc). The constitutional safeguards afforded by Congress and the courts require that, when a party takes advantage of his right to object to a magistrate's findings or recommendation, a district judge must exercise its nondelegable authority by considering the actual evidence and not merely by reviewing and blindly adopting the magistrate judge's report and recommendation. *See Hernandez v. Estelle*, 711 F.2d 619, 620 (5th Cir. 1983); *United States v. Elsoffer*, 644 F.2d 357, 359 (5th Cir. 1981) (per curiam).

SIGNED this the 19th day of June, 2012.



KEITH F. GIBLIN
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE